

## THE CLAIMS

A detailed listing of Claims 1–31 is provided below. A status identifier is provided for each claim in a parenthetical expression following each claim number.

1–6. (Canceled)

7. (Currently Amended) In a distributed system including a plurality of redundant components, a method for performance by a first redundant component, comprising:

transmitting information particular to the first redundant component to all other components in the plurality of redundant components, the information relating to one or more criteria according to which a currently-active leader component is to be determined;

receiving information from each other components in the plurality of redundant components particular to ~~the other~~ each components and relating to the one or more criteria according to which the currently-active leader component is to be determined; and,

determining whether the first redundant component is the currently-active leader component by comparing the information particular to the first redundant component with the information received from each of ~~particular to~~ the redundant components,

wherein, if the first redundant component determines that it is not the currently-active leader component, the first component ~~does not know~~ which one of the components of in the plurality of redundant ~~the other~~ components is the currently-active leader component.

8. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 7, further comprising periodically repeating the method.

9. (Canceled)

10. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 7, wherein the transmitting the information particular to the first component comprises transmitting age information particular to the first component, and the receiving the information particular to the other components comprises receiving age information particular to the other components.

11-17. (Canceled)

18. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 10 wherein the determining whether the first component is the currently-active leader component comprises determining whether the first component is an oldest component.

19. (Canceled)

20. (Currently Amended) In a computer system including a plurality of redundant components, a method for electing a currently-active leader component, comprising:

exchanging currently-active leader election criteria information among all the plurality of redundant components; and

at each component in the plurality of redundant components:

a) determining whether the component is the currently-active leader component, based on a the currently-active leader election criteria information received from all the other components in the plurality of redundant components; and

b) repeating the determining whenever the component detects an occurrence of a failure that has a potential to affect ~~possibly affecting~~ the currently-active leader component[.].

~~wherein, if the component determines that it is not the currently active leader component, the component does not know which other component in the plurality of redundant components is the currently active leader component.~~

21. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 20, further comprising:  
periodically repeating the method.

22. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 20 wherein the exchanging currently-active leader election criteria information comprises exchanging age information.

23. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 22 wherein the determining whether the component is the currently-active leader component comprises:  
determining whether the component is an oldest component; and

if the component determines that it is the oldest component, concluding that the component is the currently-active leader component.

24. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 22 wherein the exchanging age information includes exchanging information regarding how long each component in the plurality of redundant components has been online.

25. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 20 wherein the redundant components are redundant instances of a daemon.

26. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 25 wherein the daemon is a system management daemon.

27. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 25 wherein the daemon is a power line monitoring daemon.

28. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 20 wherein the redundant components are redundant executing processes.

29. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 20 wherein the redundant components are redundant class objects.

30. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 20 wherein the redundant components are redundant devices in an automation system.

31. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 20 wherein the redundant components are redundant nodes in a network.